

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application as presently amended and in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 2, 4-12, 14, 15, 17 and 18 are pending in the present application and have been amended by the present amendment.

In the outstanding Office Action, claims, 1, 2, 4-8, 12, 14, 15, 17 and 18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Kask et al. in view of Ghosh et al., which is respectfully traversed.

Independent claim 1 has been amended to clearly recite that the product design data corresponds to data used by a product design company that makes the product, and the mold design data corresponds to data used by a mold design company that designs a mold for the product made by the product design company. Claim 1 has also been amended to clarify that the product design data is converted by the application program into the mold design data by first converting the product design data into intermediate data having a standard form, and then converting the intermediate data having the standard form into the mold design data. Independent claims 15 and 18 include similar features in a varying scope.

As discussed in the Background of the Invention, a product manufacturer, which uses plastic components in its products, frequently consigns production of plastic components to an outside molding company. In such a case, in the product manufacturer, a product is typically designed using a CAD/CAM system, and data regarding the product design are provided to the molding company. However, the molding company generally uses a different type of CAD/CAM system as well as data having a different structure from the product design data. In

addition, various types of product design software programs are available. Therefore, a molding company has to continually change their system to deal with new types of product design software programs. The present invention solves this problem by providing the methods recited in independent claims 1, 15 and 18.

That is, as recited in claim 1, the product design data is uploaded via the Internet from a client computer to a server computer of an application service provider, and then the product design data is subjected to data processing by using an application program provided in the server computer. The application program converts the product design data having a first form to mold design data having a second form different from the first form. That is, the product design data is converted by the application program into the mold design data to design the mold for the product design company by first converting the product design data into intermediate data having a standard form and then converting the intermediate data having the standard form into the mold design data. The method also provides a screen for allowing a user to selectively designate a format of the product design data among a plurality of formats for different product design data and designate a format of the mold design data among a plurality of formats for different mold design data such that the product design data is converted into the mold design data to design the mold for making the product designed with the product design data.

On the contrary, neither Kask et al. nor Ghosh et al. are directed to interfacing a product design company that makes a product with a mold design company that makes a mold for the product design company. For example, Kask et al. is directed to providing an interface for transferring sheet metal part data between computer-based application environments such as a 2-D CAD system and an object-oriented bend model system (see column 3, lines 15-20). Kask

et al. does not teach or suggest an interface between a production company and a mold design company that makes a mold for the product design company. That is, the data in Kask et al. is directly transferred from one system to the other and is not first converted into intermediate data, which is then converted into mold design data. Similar comments apply to Ghosh et al. That is, Ghosh et al. is merely directed to a network-based design system that is not related to converting product design data into mold design data as in the present invention.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted independent claims 1, 15 and 18 and each of the claims depending there from are allowable.

CONCLUSION

Since the remaining references cited by the Examiner have not been utilized to reject the claims, but merely to show the state-of-the-art, no further comments are deemed necessary with respect thereto.

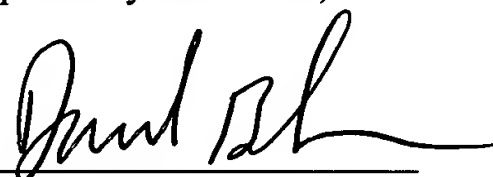
All the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed and/or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all presently pending rejections and that they be withdrawn. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the Office Action, and that as such, the Examiner is respectfully requested to send the application to Issue.

In the event there are any matters remaining in this application, the Examiner is invited to contact David A. Bilodeau, at (703) 205-8072 in the Washington, D.C. area.

If necessary, the Commission is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37.C.F.R. §§or 1.14; particularly, extension of time fees.

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Respectfully submitted,

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